

History of the SACP

SACP Timeline to 1994, including related events

Date	Event	Comment
1885	Indian National Congress	Founded in India
1886	Discovery of gold in Johannesburg	By George Harrison in Langlaagte
1893	Transvaal Indian Congress	Founded by Thambi Naidoo and H O Ally
1894	Natal Indian Congress	Founders included M K Gandhi
1898	Battle of Omdurman	British forces under Kitchener defeat Sudan
1898	Spanish-American War Begins in Cuba	First full war of capitalist Imperialism
1899	Anglo-Boer War begins	Classic war of capitalist Imperialism
1902	Anglo-Boer War ends	Imperialist war aims achieved
1902	African Political Organisation	Founded by Dr Abdullah Abdurahman
1905	First Russian Revolution	Constitutional monarchy
1908	South African Labour Party formed	White working-class party
1910	"Act of Union"	Deal between whites, excluding blacks
1912	Chinese Republic	Formed on January 1st
1912	African National Congress	Formed on January 8th
1913	Natives Land Act	Completing dispossession
1914	Split of the Second International	Outbreak of intra-Imperialist war
1915	International Socialist League (ISL)	Opposed to the war; non-racial; communist.
1917	Great October Socialist Revolution	The Russian Revolution
1917	Industrial Workers of Africa	First African Trade Union in SA, launched by ISL
1918	Bantu Women's League	Founded by Charlotte Maxeke
1919	Communist International	First Congress
1919	Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union	Led by Clemens Kadalie
1920	Second Comintern Congress	Origin of National Democratic Revolution
1920	Congress of the Peoples of the East	First international anti-Imperialist conference
1921	Third Comintern Congress	Admits CPSA and Communist Party of China
1921	Communist Party of South Africa	Founded 30 th July 1921
1922	The Rand Revolt	Open class warfare in Johannesburg
1924	Africanisation of the Party	Kotane, Marks, Mofutsanyana, Mphama, others join
1926	Expulsion of Communists from ICU	Notably Khaile, Gomas and la Guma
1928	Sixth Comintern Congress	Resolution on South Africa
1929	Black Republic Thesis	Following on from Comintern decision
1930	Pass Burning, December 16th	Death of Johannes Nkosi
1934	The Cradock Letter	Moses Kotane's critique of the Party
1935	7 th Comintern Congress	United anti-fascist Front
1935	All-African Convention	A big united-front initiative supported by the Party
1939	Kotane becomes General Secretary	Remaining for 39 years until his death in 1978
1939	Anti-fascist 2 nd World War begins	South Africa enters on the side of Britain
1941	Congress of Non-European Trade Unions	Founded
1941	Invasion of the Soviet Union	Nazis invade and are in due course defeated
1945	End of the 2 nd World War	Soviet Union victorious, but Cold War begins
1946	African Miners' Strike	This strike changed the struggle forever.
1947	Indian Independence	End of the British Raj
1947	Three Doctors' Pact	Fore-runner of the alliance
1948	National Party elected by white franchise	Disaster and beginning of formal apartheid
1949	People's Republic of China	Revolutionary Victory
1950	May 1st massacre	18 killed in the Witwatersrand
1950	CPSA banned	Disbanded before the ban

1950	June 26 th stayaway – the first June 26th	Freedom Day, in solidarity with the Communists
1951	Independence of Libya	First post-war independence of an African country
1952	Egyptian Revolution	Anti-Imperialist republic formed
1952	Defiance Campaign	The second June 26th
1953	South African Communist Party	First underground conference
1954	Women's Charter	FEDSAW formed
1955	South African Congress of Trade Unions	SACTU formed
1955	The Freedom Charter	Passed at the Congress of the People, June 26th
1956	Independence of Sudan	After 58 years
1956	The Treason Trial	156 defendants
1957	Independence of Ghana	Kwame Nkrumah becomes President of Ghana
1959	First issue of "The African Communist"	Not immediately acknowledged as from the SACP
1959	Anti-Apartheid Movement formed	June 26 th , in London, as "Boycott Movement"
1960	ANC banned	Following the Sharpeville Massacre
1960	"Year of Africa"	17 countries gain independence, including Congo
1961	Independence of Tanganyika	With Zanzibar, becomes Tanzania in 1964
1961	"The Story of the Communist Party"	Mass leaflet, first open SACP communiqué
1961	Unkhonto we Sizwe launched	Formed jointly by the SACP and the ANC
1962	Road to South African Freedom	Programme for National Democratic Revolution
1963	Rivonia setback	Capture of top leadership of the movement
1963	Independence of Kenya	Uhuru
1964	Execution of trade unionists	Mini, Khayingo and Mkaba
1965	Arrest of Bram Fischer	Imprisoned for life
1966	Independence of Lesotho and Botswana	Former British "High Commission Territories"
1967	Wankie and Sipolilo Campaigns	Unkhonto we Sizwe with ZIPRA
1968	Independence of Swaziland	Former British "High Commission Territory"
1969	ANC Morogoro conference	Strategy and Tactics
1971	Launch of Inkululeko	Party publication circulated in the country
1973	Durban Strikes	Upsurge of trade unionism
1974	Independence of Mozambique	FRELIMO then confronted with terrorism
1975	Independence of Angola	MPLA then confronted with war
1976	Uprisings in Soweto and all over SA	Young people leave the country in numbers
1980	Independence of Zimbabwe	Victory of ZANU-PF
1986	Launch of Umsebenzi	Party publication circulated in the country
1986	Congress of South African Trade Unions	COSATU formed
1988	Victory of Cuito Cuanavale	Decisive military action defeating SADF
1989	7 th SACP Congress	Launch of "The Path to Power"
1990	SACP and ANC unbanned	February
1990	Namibia Independent	March
1994	First non-racial elections	ANC Victory: the Democratic Breakthrough

Sources:

Title	Author	Date
Sidney Percival Bunting	Eddie Roux	1943
Time Longer than Rope	Eddie Roux	1948
The Peasants' Revolt	Govan Mbeki	1964
Class and Colour in South Africa 1850-1950	Jack and Ray Simons	1969
Fifty Fighting Years	Michael Harmel	1971
Moses Kotane	Brian Bunting	1975
South African Communists Speak	Edited collection	1981
The Struggle for Liberation in South Africa	Govan Mbeki	1990
The Red Flag	Brian Bunting and others	1990